

SUBJECTS

Toy Fair Is Facing Challenges

On its sparkly, fun-loving surface, at least, all is well and business is booming at the American International Toy Fair, which opens today in Manhattan. The venerable trade show, with its festival of news releases and celebrity-party invitations, has signed up more exhibitors this year, 1,640, than last year to hawk their Barbies and Power Rangers and Matchbox Lamborghinis.

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49, 52

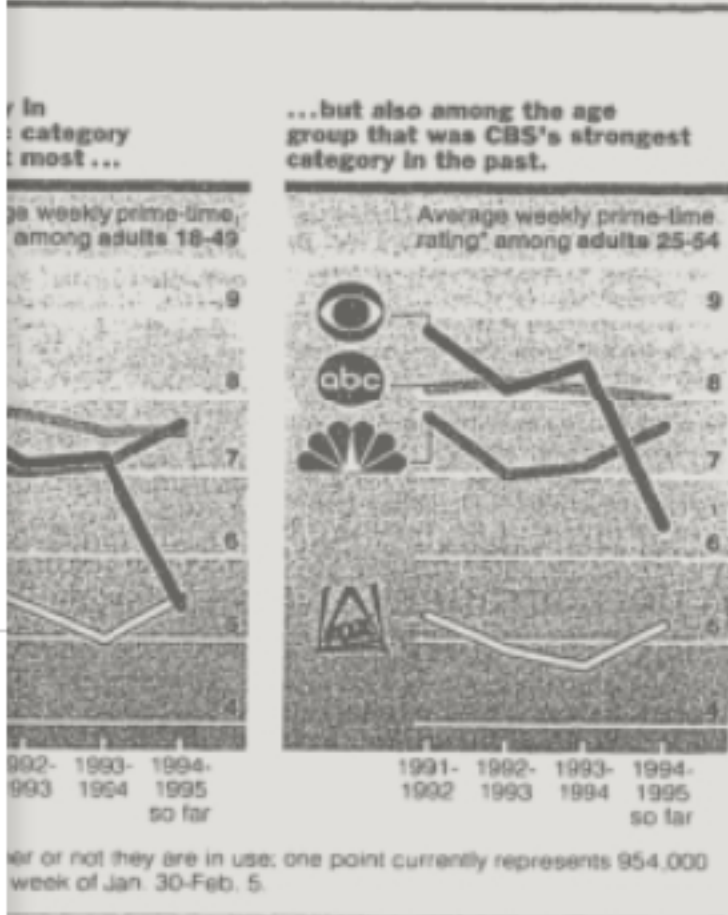
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Day

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1995



Sinks in Ratings

candidate for another position has only served to fuel the rumors that CBS will be sold soon.

So far in the prime-time television season, CBS has fallen precipitously from the 14 rating it averaged last season — when the network benefited from the especially strong performance of the Winter Olympics — to an 11.4 rating. Each rating point equals 954,000 television households.

CBS is also off sharply in the age categories in which most advertising is sold — adults from 18 to 49 years old and adults from 25 to 54.

The ratings decline has led to a serious problem for CBS: having to give advertisers more commercials

Continued on Page D6

for Orange County

learn to operate like a business.

"Personally, I think hiring from the private sector is very appropriate," said John Cox, a councilman from Newport Beach and chairman of the county's sanitation board.

"The changes that have gone on in the private sector have been awesome over the last five years. There's a lot of fresh thinking there. We have to look at that."

He added: "I think what you're hearing is related to the election last November. We saw all that dissatisfaction with the way government is run. It's gotten too bloated over the past 30 years."

Continued on Page D3

the World Bank



Toy Fair Is Facing Challenges

Javits Center's Costs And Rival Are Cited

By GLENN COLLINS

On its sparkly, fun-loving surface, at least, all is well and business is booming at the American International Toy Fair, which opens today in Manhattan.

The venerable trade show, with its festival of news releases and celebrity-party invitations, has signed up more exhibitors this year, 1,640, than last year to hawk their Barbies and Power Rangers and Matchbox Lamborghinis.

Indeed, in its first year in Manhattan, the toy fair is expecting 20,000 buyers from 30 countries, just as many as last year. And its exhibition space in the Jacob K. Javits Center was booked solid by November, with a waiting list of 300.

Yet today, as fairgoers — the public is not invited — jam the famously overcrowded elevators in the Toy Center at Fifth Avenue and 23d Street before heading to exhibits in the Javits Center later this week, the toy fair is facing worrisome new challenges. Industry executives and experts say the New York toy fair is in danger of having its scope and influence sharply reduced in the future.

One problem, they say, is the relatively small size and high costs of the Javits Center, compared with show halls in other cities. An even bigger problem, they agree, is the fundamental evolution in retailing patterns in the \$18 billion United States toy industry — where many toy orders are placed well before the toy fair offers itself as a showcase. This trend may have already discouraged the participation of Hasbro, America's second-largest toy company after Mattel Inc.

"The potential is that we may not show in New York next year," said Wayne Charness, a spokesman for Hasbro, which has three showrooms in and near the Manhattan Toy Center. "The publicity and high profile may not be enough for the expense."

He said the company, which was surpassed by Mattel in sales last year, for the first time since 1985, would "save in the millions" if it left the toy center. "Toy Fair is becoming less important, except as a showcase, because by this time the major retailers, and even nonmajors, have already had two or three looks at our line," he said.

Yet another challenge comes from the little-noted but fast expansion of an upstart, the Dallas International Toy Import Show held in the Dallas Market Center in January. That show has the potential to siphon off

Continued on Page D4

Price Rises By Factories On Increase

By LOUIS UCHITELLE

Special to The New York Times  
WEST PALM BEACH, Fla., Feb.

Blockbuster

By GERALDINE FARKANT

Steven R. Berrard, president of the Blockbuster Entertainment Corporation, a division of Viacom Inc., is under investigation by the District Attorney's office for possible perjury in connection with a lawsuit against Blockbuster.

Viacom executives testified yesterday that Mr. Berrard committed perjury in connection with an investigation of Mr. Berrard's alleged perjury.

The suit stems from a limited partnership formed by Scott Beck, chairman and chief executive of Boston Chicken Inc. In 1988, Beck created a partnership to invest in Blockbuster, the largest non-video distributor in the United States. Among the investors was Charles Howell of Dallas.

While Mr. Beck sold his interest back to Blockbuster for \$110 million in 1989, Mr. Howell, who sold his stake two years later, got less than the \$600,000 he had invested, according to the article in Newsweek.

In a suit brought by Mr. Howell, a Texas state court found that Beck had violated his partnership agreements by selling his interest.

Japanese Will

By ANDREW POLLACK

Special to The New York Times

TOKYO, Feb. 12 — The Pioneer Electronic Corporation will be the first Japanese company to market a personal computer compatible with Apple Computer's Macintosh, industry officials said on Friday.

Pioneer scheduled a news conference for Wednesday to announce

Stocks Higher in Japan

TOKYO, Monday, Feb. 13 (Reuters) — Stocks were slightly higher here today. The Nikkei index of issues was up 22.51 points, or 0.1 percent, at 18,313.86. On Friday, Nikkei rose 191.80 points.

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